

THE LEISURE TIME PROBLEM

by

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## C O N T E N T S

	Page
INTRODUCTION	iv

## P A R T I

CHAPTER I	PSYCHOLOGY OF PLAY	1
CHAPTER II	RECREATION A HUMAN NEED	3
CHAPTER III	POSSIBILITIES OF LEISURE	15

## P A R T II

## WORKABLE PROGRAM OF RECREATION FOR LAWRENCE

## THE PROBLEM STATED

CHAPTER I	A STUDY OF THE PLAY LIFE AND RECREA- TIONAL PROBLEMS WITH RECOMMENDATIONS	23
CHAPTER II	PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITIES	29
CHAPTER III	DISCUSSION OF PRESENT RECREATIONAL FACILITIES WITH SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	33

## CHAPTER IV A RECREATION SYSTEM AND PROGRAM THAT

*Employ*  
WILL ~~FUNCTION~~ ALL THE PRESENT AND  
FUTURE FACILITIES, WITH SYSTEM,  
BUDGET AND PROGRAM

44

Task of a Municipal Recreation System

50

Playgrounds for Lawrence

52

The Auditorium

55

Commercialized Recreation in Lawrence

59

The Home and Recreation

60

Picture Shows

61

## THE GIFT OF PLAY

Edgar A. Guest.

Some have the gift of song and some possess the gift of silver  
 speech.  
 Some have the gift of leadership and some the ways of life can  
 teach.  
 And fame and wealth reward their friends, in jewels are their  
 splendours told,  
 But in good time their favorites grow very faint and gray and  
 old.  
 But there are men who laugh at time and hold the cruel years at  
 bay;  
 They romp through life forever young because they have the gift  
 of play.

They walk with children, hand in hand through daisy fields and  
 orchards fair,  
 Nor all the dignity of age and power and pomp can follow there;  
 They've kept the magic charm of youth beneath the wrinkled robes  
 of Time,  
 And there's no friendly apple tree they've grown too old to climb.  
 They have not let their boyhood die, they can be children for the  
 day;  
 They have not bartered for success and all its praise the gift  
 of play.

They think and talk in terms of youth, with love of life their  
 eyes are bright,  
 No rheumatism of the soul has robbed them of the world's delight;  
 They laugh and sing their way along and join in pleasures when  
 they can  
 And in their glad philosophy they hold that mirth becomes a man.  
 They spend no strength in growing old. What if their brow be  
 crowned with gray?  
 The spirits in their breasts are young. They still possess the  
 gift of play.

The richest men of life are not the ones who rise to wealth and  
 fame---  
 Not the great sages, old and wise, and grave of face and bent of  
 frame,  
 But the glad spirits, tall and straight, who 'spite of time and  
 all its care  
 Have kept the power to laugh and sing and in youth's fellowship  
 to share.  
 They that can walk with boys and be a boy among them, blithe  
 and gay,  
 Defy the withering blasts of age because they have the gift of  
 play.

## INTRODUCTION.

In treating the subject at hand the writer had two objects in mind. First to show the significance of leisure time by pointing out its possibilities and second to work out a practical program which will utilize some of these possibilities in a concrete situation. Part one consists of a general treatment of the subject, showing our waste and perversion of leisure. In it the writer has tried to show the false theory we apply in our recreation--that is, we want to be amused rather than to amuse ourselves. In the second part the author has tried to show the way to carry out his theory in detail. Lawrence was chosen because of its convenience. The University and Haskell Institute complicate the situation but as far as possible these institutions were not considered. The reason for confining my efforts to the city proper was to make the program as <sup>useful</sup> ~~elastic~~ as possible so that it might with slight modifications be used in any normal community.

The writer has made a thoro study of the recreation conditions and problems of Lawrence, with the idea of giving the city a more adequate municipal recreation service. It has been kept in mind that the plan must be more than one concerning playgrounds and children; that it must provide for the young man and woman, and adults. It has been recognized that the problem is not so much one of day but rather one of evening recreation. It is a question of taking care of the leisure

time of all, the people, all the time.

The Recreation System suggested purposes not only to develop the School Recreation System, playgrounds, social and play centers, but to take care of the young men and women and the older folks by year round municipal program that will satisfy the needs of the community.

The study was (1) undertaken to see just what Lawrence possesses both in the way of recreational facilities and supervision; (2) to carefully estimate whether the public recreation facilities are now being used to their fullest extent; (3) to suggest what should be done to increase the efficiency of the present facilities; (4) to outline future facilities and possibilities that would take care of the growing demands of the community, and finally; (5) to suggest a recreational system and program that would coordinate all the possible facilities into a common plan that would take care of the free time of all the citizens.

The impetus given recreation during the war has had an important effect upon the community recreation. Most communities are unwilling to lose the community spirit to which war service gave rise and are striving to conserve the values of team play during the war. Out of all of this has come an emphasis of community expression. People are asking that the recreational activities of the war be continued and many com-

munities are taking advantage of this opportunity.

The war had its effect upon recreation, not only thru emphasizing the community values involved, but also in the development of the municipal recreation movement which for years has been slowly gaining ground. A large number of communities which never before had a recreation system have inaugurated the work recently. Some very definite advances made recently are given and these are indicative of the general trend thruout the country. Detroit, Michigan has authorized a bond issue of \$10,000,000 for the purchase of parks and play grounds. Portland , Oregon has voted \$500,000 for playgrounds and many cities have doubled their appropriations for municipal recreation.

The writer feels confident that the suggested program if put into action would be of real value to the community. Many interested citizens have signified their desire to aid in such a piece of constructive work. Doctor Naismith, (head of the Physical Education Dept. at K.U.), is willing to assist in putting this program into operation and to aid in giving Lawrence an all year round, system, whereby the schools parks, semi-public centers, vacant lots, will function for all the people young and old.

PART I.



## CHAPTER I.

## PSYCHOLOGY OF PLAY.

Play is a universal trait in animal as well as human life.

There is no tribe or race of people which have not displayed this characteristic in some form. Study of primitive man in his lowest conditions of existence, reveals the fact that, he possessed the spirit of play however crude its form. Since the characteristic of play is evident in the various stages of human development, the logical conclusion is, that it is instinctive. It is present in the infant from birth and the "business" of play occupies the major portion of the child's life in his early years.

There have been four theories advanced concerning the nature and purpose of play. The first is set forth by Karl Groos. His theory is to the effect that play is "an impulsive function serving to call into being those activities which are to be useful later in life." According to this theory the puppies play with each other in order that they may strengthen themselves.

The second theory is the Surplus-Energy theory held by Herbert Spencer. This theory holds that play represents a discharge of surplus energy. For example an individual who is not engaged in physical activity will turn to play as a means of ridding himself of his stored surplus energy.

Stanley Hall offers a third theory of play. It is to the effect that every individual repeats in abridged form, the activities thru which the race has passed. That is the child in

its development rehearses the activities of our ancestors. He plays Indian, hunts bear, fishes and other things that will be useful to him later in life.

The fourth theory is the one advanced by a modern school of Psychologists. This theory holds that play is growth--that is the child plays because it is his nature. Hence in playing, he grows and develops in the way nature intended.

Each one of these theories has its value but probably no single one can account for the phenomena of play. Perhaps the growth theory is the most plausible of the four. If this is to be true then the big problem is to see that this growth is properly directed. If properly directed it will contribute to man's happiness---misdirected it may become a serious handicap to human progress. Since play is instinctive, we find it evident in adult life as well as in youth. Hence the guidance of this instinct presents a perplexing problem in modern life.

## CHAPTER II

## RECREATION A HUMAN NEED.

The need for recreation has increased tremendously in the past generation. Modern modes of living have multiplied the stress and strain upon the individual. The enormous number of stimuli the individual is required to meet is increasingly greater than it was a generation ago. Modern industry tends to deaden the senses by the monotony and humdrum of its tasks. The human element is gradually being crushed out and the man is coming more and more to be a machine. Modern industry demands that man shall perform one simple task all day long. Such a requirement stagnates the imagination and taxes the nervous system to the utmost.

This hurry and push of modern life is not confined to industry alone but pervades all phases of American life. The bottled lightning type of man appeals to the American. Europeans are constantly reminding us of our strained countenances and our madness to get things done in a hurry. Herbert Spencer well expresses the idea, when he says, "Primitive man lacks the power of application. He is spurred on by his instincts of hunger, fear, etc.---he can exert himself energetically for a time but his energy is spasmodic. Monotonous daily toil is impossible to him. The stern discipline of social life has gradually increased the aptitude for persistent industry. Civilized man's work has become a passion. The savage thinks only of the present

but the American eagerly pursues the future good, and almost ignores what good the passing day offers him." It seems to me this is a vivid picture of modern American life. In the mad rush for wealth, pleasure, comfort and happiness, the American misses many of the worth while things of life. The old adage "Pastures are green a long way off" seems to be his philosophy. Like the Indian Prince who deserted his home and family to go in search of diamonds, who after spending the most fruitful years of his life in the vain search, returned home only to find, that the greatest diamond mines of the world were under his feet. There were the diamonds under his feet but they were too close to him---he must go away ~~off~~ somewhere in search of treasure. The American is unduly anxious about the future. Professor James pictures the lightning activity of Americans when he says, "Americans live like an army with all its reserves in action with no provision for a supply of reserve energy for future achievements".

This lightning pace of the American has made great inroads upon the efficiency of American life. Nervous breakdowns are far too frequent. Physicians tell us that the average American breaks down a little past 45 years of age, just at the period when he should be most useful to society. Medical men say the fundamental cause of these early breakdowns is persistent activity, without the proper gratification of recreational desires.

The business man in his desire for a successful career, suppresses the recreative impulse. His theory is, that he shall work hard for several months and then take his recreation all in a lump. Herein he deceives himself---for one must get his enjoyment out of life as he goes. There is a world of philosophy in the saying that "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Play is by no means confined to children---the normal mind plays but its form is manifest in a different way. Every man should have his "play time" daily---he should have a hobby such as gardening, sports, reading, fishing, hunting or any other wholesome activity to divert his attention from his daily task. Too long and persistent application deadens the mind which in turn saps ones mental efficiency. Charles Darwin is an eminent example of this sort of thing. Near the close of life he said, "Had I my life to live over again, I would make it a rule to hear some music and read some poetry each day."

Recreation in its real sense is the utilization of leisure time. Some one has said the way a people use their leisure time determines their civilization. I fully believe this statement and believe it applies to individuals as well as to groups. When a man has finished his day's work his mind naturally turns to the thing he is interested in. This "natural interest" may be any thing from gambling and low-

class vaudeville to golf and baseball. Many unthinking men say give the people what they want in recreation. Nor greater fallacy can be imagined for the great majority of people are guided by uncontrolled instincts. The commercial world works upon this theory---they commercialize human weakness by catering to their lower motives. People will be interested in the better things of life if they only have the proper direction. This taste must be cultivated. A man is not born with a taste for whiskey; neither is he born with a taste for the finer things of life. Since man's character is largely determined by the way he spends his leisure time, it is the duty of society to provide properly for wholesome recreation.

George Eliot well says, " As important as it is to direct the industry of our country, it is as important to direct its leisure time." The writer feels that in this statement lies the basic reason for studying the subject in hand. We have plenty of data as to how people get their food, clothing, shelter and earn their living but very little as to how they spend their leisure time. The *Laissez faire* doctrine prevails in recreation, ----in other words we have allowed the management of leisure time to be monopolized by commercial interests whose aim is dividends rather than human development. The commercial men cater to the lowest motives of the people and fool them into thinking they are getting what they want. The modern popular amusement is de-

ceptive and does not really satisfy the people. In a great many cases the modern amusement acts as a narcotic. America has the amusement craze and attempts to satisfy this craze by superficial methods. The glare of the white lights, the dance hall, the movie, and vaudeville attract the excitement-starved people. Modern business and industrial life is highly taxing upon the nervous system and at the end of the day's work people feel they must have something to relieve the strain.

It seems to me we employ a false theory in most of our recreation. We want to be amused rather than amuse ourselves. It is strange how little intelligent people attempt to amuse themselves. When all places of amusement were closed during the recent epidemics people did not know what to do with themselves. When thrown upon their own resources they were unable to amuse themselves satisfactorily. It seems to me in its real sense, recreation means to amuse oneself---the individual must participate in the event if he is to get the full benefit out of his leisure time.

Recreation is not an event or occasion, but a habit, an attitude. The big problem is to translate the play spirit into one's work. Some one has well said, "As a man playeth so is he." This is literally true for a man who does not enjoy his work will never make a success at it. The successful man makes play out of his work.

One of the great difficulties that presents itself in solving the recreation problem is the puritanic attitude that exists toward play and amusements. This attitude holds play to be idleness and wickedness. To this type of people the man who never smiles or enjoys himself, lives the most successful life. This puritanic spirit must go---people must enjoy themselves here and now and worry less about the future,

This austere attitude has been traced to the early Christians who refused to sanction the Roman games because of their brutality and obscenity. The Church was justified in condemning these brutal amusements for as long as a nation's recreation is centered in the bull fight, it can never rise in spiritual progress. Mexico is a modern example of this very thing. The mistake of the Church is that they are condemning all amusements simply because many of them are evil. Many churches today condemn the theater as a whole---however when the theater is properly controlled it has immense educational advantages. If the Church would lend its influence, the theater could be made a cultural and educational institution of the highest type. The same may be said of other amusements the Church is unwilling to sanction. Many of the so-called "evil" amusements could be made wholesome if the proper leadership and environment were afforded them.

Sentimentalists have wasted tears and sympathy upon pros-



titutes and criminals but have never looked behind mere symptoms. Like the hog, they find the fallen acorns in the mud and pull them out but never look up to see where or why they fell. If I should find a person drowning I might easily rescue him but if I were to guard his future I would teach him to swim. So with people who have not learned how to live--- it is not enough to show them that they are doing wrong---the important thing is to help them to do right.

We have very unwisely turned <sup>over</sup> the direction of leisure time largely to commerce. Commerce will provide what the public demands. It will provide a noble drama or it will steal an innocent girl and barter her soul to some selfish wretch for a few miserable dollars. Generally speaking commerce has no conscience but panders to the grosser passions of humanity because these are the most easily enticed, the most immediate. This has intensified our taboo of pleasure and as a result many good people have been driven from the recreation field thus allowing the recreational interests too often to be in the hands of the lowest element of the community. Commercialized recreation has failed to consider the welfare of the community in its zeal for wealth and in too many cases it has criminal tendencies.

Commercialized amusement satisfies the lower desire. Now suppose a man has just two desires---one to see something artistic and uplifting, and the other to see something low or

suggestive. Either desire will exclude the other. Commerce will provide amusement which costs the least and satisfies the most quickly. It is much easier to provide a short skirt, tights and a few suggestive jokes than to engage real artists to perform. One pleases him immediately, the other requires development and appreciation. Commerce commercializes human weakness thus weakening instead of strengthening the individual.

Commerce supplies only those amusements which yield immediate returns in dollars and cents. Commerce would never build a free school system, a playground, a library, a museum, or a decent club-house. It confines its energy and capital to things which pay big dividends, and leaves the institutions which bring no cash return to be provided by the community. It has given only those amusements which are enticing and has left the burden of uplift upon the community. Commerce has dismally failed to meet the real needs of the people. It has promoted and sustained vice; it has caused a dearth of art; it has failed to supply the community with the recreative facilities it needs.

We hire persons with unimpeachable reputations to train the minds of children for the few hours they are in school and yet, we allow the play of the child too often to be directed by the irresponsible members of the community. We totally disregard the principle that play and concrete illustrations are more influential in the formative period of the child's life than the formal training he gets at school. The home can never be pure

until the amusements outside the home are pure. The traditional conception of education is too narrow---it confines the child's learning to the school room. Education in its real sense is adjustment to life--"it is living and not preparing to live in the future." Some one has well said, "Better a playground without a school than a school without a playground." Only when people really see that recreation and education go hand in hand can we expect to make real progress.

The great increase of leisure in American life is an accomplished fact. We now have to a large extent the eight hour day and the weekly half holiday is becoming common. This increase in amount of leisure presents a tremendously complex problem. Most of the current problems of immorality and vice are essentially problems of the control of leisure. Popular leisure is constantly increasing and must be reckoned with. One of the greatest problems before the American people today is the intelligent direction of leisure. It is said that the City of Milwaukee spends 1000 years of leisure each week. Mr. Wilcox says, "The difference between virtue and vice as characteristic of a community lies in the use people make of their leisure time. Work even under the worst conditions causes few moral wrecks. It is the pleasure seeking run amuck that threatens the integrity and permanence of our institutions." Leisure well used constitutes one of the greatest forces for human

progress. Misused it may properly be termed the greatest menace to civilization.

With modern machinery several new elements have arisen, one of which is highly specialized work. With it comes monotony. Individuality is suppressed, even the motions of the operator of the machine in a factory are mapped out for him. He follows this ceaseless, changeless routine day after day, year after year. His work becomes a dull, weary grind instead of pleasure. With specialization comes high speed; every factory has its pace setters; every industry and establishment keeps a record of the speed of its employees. High pressure during short hours is a natural preparation for dissipation during long hours of leisure. Since modern business and industry do put the employee under such a strain it is the duty of the employers and community to properly provide for the popular leisure time.

From the foregoing discussion it will be seen that commercialized recreation has failed in its real purpose. Realizing this fact then it seems but logical to offer a substitute. The writer does not advocate immediate overthrow of all forms of commercial recreation, for he well realizes that changes of real value in society are never made suddenly. However there is today a trend toward municipally owned and controlled recreation facilities. Fifty years ago a public park was unheard of in

America---today a city is considered behind the times without one. A generation ago a public playground or athletic field was hardly thot of. Today all progressive cities are supplied with these. Milwaukee, in the summer of 1913, furnished grounds for 450 amateur baseball beams with over 4000 players, and 20,000 games of tennig were played on the city courts. Chicago, Kansas City and other cities have added free band concerts. For the most part, however, the efforts of the city in solving the recreation problem must be rated next to nothing. We have spent millions on recreation for the rich---boulevards, golf courses, etc, but have only begun to make meagre appropriations for the poor, who need most help because they cannot provide amusement for themselves.

The writer believes the social center to be a great step in solving the problem of recreation. While this is a new and developing institution, it seems to me to be the beginning of a final solution. It consists of a substantial, well-equipped building with a plot of ground ranging from three acres to fifteen or twenty around it. It is a community center and supplies the greater part of the recreation of the community. The successful social center must be democratic, open to all classes of people for their use and enjoyment. It is a place where people get to know one another and frændliness of the highest type is fostered. It should provide for both indoor and outdoor ath-

letics, because they satisfy more people and do more good than most forms of recreation. It should have slides for the children, trapeze and baseball diamonds for the youth, tennis courts and lighter games for adults. It should provide parties for both sexes once a week or oftener---young people who are strangers would have a chance to become acquainted. The social center has unlimited possibilities in promoting the growth of the community. The social center demonstrated its usefulness during the war in the embryo stage, surely in a more perfect form it can be made vital in times of peace.

## CHAPTER III

## POSSIBILITIES OF LEISURE TIME

"The two principal forms of opportunity are leisure and education. All environments are valuable to the development of genius only in so far as they secure education. Leisure is a means of education. Leisure was the great school to mankind. Before there was any such thing as pastime education. Leisure began with the priesthood, and to it owe all we possess of early Indian, Chinese, Chaldean and Egyptian learning. The ruling classes of Greece and Rome possessed it. But for it, they would have accomplished little in art, literature, or philosophy. But it must not be supposed that all the leisure mankind have enjoyed has been well employed; most of it has either been wasted or worse than wasted." These words are used by Lester F. Ward in his discussion of opportunity in which he proves that by education we can increase the ability of society at least one hundred fold.

When a man discovers a gold mine he is not content with the discovery; he proceeds to develop it. He is not content with developing the mine; he desires to purchase leisure and opportunity with the gold he digs from the mine. Humanity, in the invention of machinery and the achievement of free government, has discovered a gold mine. We are developing that mine; we are rapidly securing wealth and leisure; the

day is in sight when only six hours work will be the task of every man. Even to-day we are outraged to discover a few thousand wage-earners, slaves working twelve hours a day, in Pennsylvania industries. We forget that this was the doom of the vast mass of humanity upto a generation ago. We forget that goodly civilizations have arisen and blossomed from the soil of outright slavery. It is not inequality of wealth or political oppression, which have wrecked the great nations from Ancient Egypt to the present time. All nations, that have achieved greatness because they discovered some kind of a gold mine and mined the gold and purchased leisure and opportunity for at least a part of the population. The greatness of nations has grown from the wisw utilization of leisure and opportunity, which their material achievements have purchased for them. In other words, nations have blossomed or perished according to the use they made of their leisure time.

We have to-day in America, apparently more leisure time than we have proved ourselves able to use well. We are getting more leisure time constantly for more of the people. Let us hope that we may, as Ancient Athens did, use our leisure time to create great ideals; let us hope that we may not do as some great nations, dissipate our leisure time and corrupt not only ourselves but the whole world.

The problem of the 20th Century is not the creation of wealth. The 20th century problem is the conservation of the



leisure time of its people, for only in this way shall we get an educated people, and only thru an educated people can we hope to secure economic justice, responsible political freedom, or the conservation of the resources of the earth. Thomas Jefferson said, "If a nation expects to be free and ignorant in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be."

This, then, is the problem of conservation which concerned statemen of the earliest nations, and which confronts the thinkers of to-day. We cannot humanize or broadly educate our people during the hours of machine industry, which are working hours. Only thru their leisure time can we educate them, nor can we train even the child during those school hours when we are training him for mere economic productiveness, along lines of individualistic advantage. Even the child must be humanized and prepared for citizenship during his leisure hours. You are not dealing with the real child in the school-room--you are dealing with a little caged animal. You only find the real child when he is at leisure. Our problem is an old one but one that needs new emphasis.

With progressiveness in civilization, the desire becomes more complex, more refined, more spiritual and the individual produced should be more highly educated. Hence we must supplement machine industry with a truly educated workman. Thru lei-

sure time, and the interests and activities of leisure time, only can we produce the educated workman. Taken from whatever point of approach, the purely economic process is dependent on the social demand, which is a largely leisure time matter.

"The leisure time problem is not how the workman can have more time for play; it is how he can have more time for association, to take his share in the integrated thot and will and responsibility which is to make the new world. We are not a part of a nation because we live within its boundaries--we are part of a nation only in so far as we are helping to make that nation.2 Miss Follet,--"New State."

While the leisure time of the laboring man presents a perplexing problem perhaps the leisure problem of the so-called society woman, presents a more difficult one. Women who have no children and practically no home responsibilities, too often fritter away their time on frivolous and trifling matters. No doubt one of the biggest causes of domestic trouble is the misdirection of leisure time. If these dissatisfied and deceived women would concentrate their time and effort upon some worth while task their dissatisfaction would fade into nothingness. They would discover then, that only creation brings happiness and joy into life. Happiness is never found by those who consciously search for it. True happiness is a by-product and is only found by those who have something worth while to do. If the energy wasted by the average society wo-

man, in trifling society affairs, could be directed into creative and constructive channels, it would not only aid greatly in purifying our society but the society women would find the true joy of living.

"Will men and women spend their time in trivial or evil things when they discover that they can make a whole world to their liking? Go and look at the young people in their round of gaiety at night. It is a depressing sight. A tragedy is a tragedy, and it has its own nobility; but this farce of a city population enjoying itself at night is a pitiful spectacle. Go to the dances and the theaters and the mass of young people look indifferent and more or less bored. They have not found the real joy of life." Follet. "New State."

It is a far more difficult task for civilization to teach men to use leisure rightly than to labor efficiently. Most people waste enough leisure time to make themselves great musicians, artists, scholars or poets, which might enable them to minister to human happiness even beyond that which they can do in their vocation.

We hear much of the wasted farces of our nation--the neighborhood organization movement is a movement to use some of the wasted social energy of the nation. It is perhaps one of the biggest movements yet conceived for conservation of the wasted social energy. We certainly do not have more value in

forests and waterworks in America than in human beings. To redirect the spiritual energy of human beings is the big task of society to-day and it is only thru group activities and relationships, with intelligent leadership this task can be accomplished.

PART II

WORKABLE RECREATION PROGRAM

for

LAWRENCE

## INTRODUCTION

### The Object

The object is to utilize the parks to socialize the schools, to utilize vacant places, such as lots, yards, prairies, and to capitalize the semi-public and private recreational centers.

### The Job

The practical work for Lawrence is to help these, public and private recreational facilities, to serve the community to their fullest capacity by affording clean, wholesome, personally conducted play and amusement. A Recreational Board representative of all groups involved, and in cooperation with all, with a trained Recreation Superintendent can accomplish this.

### The Need

Lawrence needs play leadership. The problem is not one so much of space, but rather one of administration and

### Leadership

Present facilities can be put into immediate use thru wise management. It is a matter of efficiency and economy. Play grounds unsupervised are dangerous for they are breeding places for gangs and iniquities.

## THE PROBLEM STATED

Lawrence should be thoroly committed to supervised playgrounds. There has been a tendency to establish playgrounds with no thot of supervision. This is dangerous and harmful to the playground movement. Cities have made costly mistakes and have reaped a harvest of nuisances, because they, at first, did not recognize play leadership. Lawrence can well profit by the mistakes of other cities and introduce supervision at once.

It should be recognized by public officials that recreation is a public utility; that the play leader on the playground is just as important as the teacher in the class-room; rather no playground at all, than one unsupervised; that a play leader can do more and get better results than the policemen who are, in a way, supervisors.

There should be creative activities in our schools, parks and playgrounds, thru trained play leaders and Lawrence boys and girls will not frequent, the streets, poolrooms, dance halls and similar places. To accomplish this does no mean so much exta expense as it necessitates cooperation, which is often times more difficult to get than money, If Lawrence can get her public and private bodies--all a part of a complete recreation system--to get together around a common table, purpose and leadership common as well, solving common problems, her task will be largely completed.

## CHAPTER I

A Study of the Play Life and Recreational Problems  
with Recommendations and Suggestions

Lawrence has a population of fifteen thousand (15,000). Not counting Saturday afternoons, Sundays and holidays, and the enormous free time of women and children, it is a conservative estimate that the average individual enjoys five hours free time each day.

Lawrence citizens, therefore, enjoy the privilege and opportunity of the following amount of free time:

75,000 hours per day free time.  
525, 000 hours per week free time.  
2,100,000 hours per month free time.

The vital problem that is facing Lawrence is: Are the people using this immense amount of time to the best advantage, and what public care is made for its proper direction and use? Is Lawrence making these recreation hours an asset rather than a liability? We should see to it that it becomes increasingly hard to do wrong and increasingly easy to do right. At present cities make it difficult to do right and easy to do wrong. Each city has its own separate problems. It has its own personality. However, like most cities, these are a set of common problems that be solved. According to the best standards of city planning, Lawrence is a residential, intellectual center.



### Studies in Lawrence's Play Life

In the Lawrence survey a thousand questionnaires answered by the school children as to the character of their play, give the following facts:

"Most boys and girls have household duties which they do before and after supper. Many boys work as errand or news-boys. Few girls work during the week except at home; some take care of babies; a number work on Saturdays. Girls and boys who work usually play Saturday evenings and on Sundays.

"With boys, the streets, vacant lots, yards, creeks, railway tracks are used mostly as playgrounds. The river, the prairie and the alley call a good many. School grounds and public properties are little used after school.

"Girls play mostly in yards and streets. A number play in vacant lots and open fields. They seldom use public places and occasionally a school yard is mentioned.

Boys and girls play before and after supper. Many play in the evenings especially during the long summer months.

There is little variety in the games and sports played. In winter, it is skating, snowplay and very little else. There are some indoor sports, but very little. The boys play more than the girls both winter and summer.

In summer girls, play chase, ring and tag games. There is very little folk dancing, and practically no dramatic play, no teamwork for purposeful athletics. In summer, the boys

play baseball, the running games and some seasonal games, such as tops, marbles and kites. There is little intelligent sport or athletics. Few play basket ball and volley ball, and practically no boy enjoys the pleasures of handball and many other playground and gymnastic sports that contain the elements of strength, team-work, competition, organization and emulation. This analysis shows the need for teaching more kinds of games, plays and sports. An intelligent promotion of the play-life by means of purposeful play is a necessity. Any child would rather play a good, well ordered game, according to rule, demanding skill and team work, rather than just hang around or chase his mates.

Practically everybody plays Saturday and Sunday. Many state that they have a school ground close by, but that they seldom use it. These visits are occasional rather than regular. There was an almost unanimous desire for neighborhood play-grounds, particularly for the development of school yards. Boys and girls not being near an open space often ask for one to be placed close by. The reasons for play-grounds were varied, intelligent and interesting. In answer to the question, Why do you want a play-ground? these are a few typical answers:

"Because they won't have to play in the street."

"School-grounds are too far away."

"In order to play more often"

These are excellent and fundamental reasons. Boys and girls of Lawrence want play-grounds, close by, in neighborhoods accessible, and where they can meet each other and learn how to play with their friends, in a decent place and not in the streets and the lots. These answers simply prove the fact that Lawrence's children are much like other children, in that they play, want to play, but most of the time are idle, doing nothing, and when playing, it is only a few, aimless tag games in the streets, yards and vacant lots. Sunday there is a great deal of just "loafing", fooling and sitting around.

The following are typical answers:

"I work and play."

"I play in the yards and streets."

"I play after school, and on Saturdays, Sundays and during vacation."

"In summer I play tag and swim."

"There is no play-ground close by."

These are typical answers, and they tell the whole story.

There is plenty of running, chasing, fooling, but little of the right kind of play.

There is little variety, and practically no skilled games that demand practice and regulated conduct.

It is clear that the public recreational centers now standing are not being used to their fullest capacity, while streets, lots and railroads are regularly used.

It is shown that there is need for play supervision

and leadership.

### Facts in Other Cities

From careful observation of 33,122 children, in cities varying from 22,000 to 500,000 in population, 45% of the children were loafing outside of school hours--doing nothing because there was nothing to do. Forty-three percent were in the streets and alleys; 24 % in private yards; 7% in vacant lots, and only 4% in public playgrounds.

A study of 23,765 children in schools of different neighborhoods in Cleveland, Milwaukee, Kansas City, Detroit and Providence shows an average of 52% doing nothing outside of school hours. Almost a sadder thing than death is this fact, that 50% of our boys and girls are loafing around doing nothing. Such a boy is not only father to the man with an empty dinner pail, but he is to be the man with an empty life.

Street play is common in American cities and towns. If children are warned off the streets, some other place must be provided. The fact that there is nearly seven times as much street play as private play, accounts largely for the fact that over 50 % of the children after school are found in the streets, alleys and dirt heaps. These are unhygienic, unsafe, and unmoral if not immoral. The vacant lot is a menace when it is not supervised. It becomes a breeding place for the idle, the mischievous and the vicious. However, by wise management, vacant

lots can be utilized as a constructive agency in upbuilding the play life of Lawrence. It is clear from the record of Lawrence's children are in the streets, yards and lots; hence the need for organizing this kind of play in districts, where there are no available school, park or public spaces. Play leadership for these places on stated dates and scheduled hours, should be provided for under regulation.

## CHAPTER II

## PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITIES

In Chapter I, we made the statement of the play-life of Lawrence. In Chapter II we shall discuss the present recreational facilities, with suggestions and recommendations for their use and improvement.

One High School plant with Auditorium, etc.

Six School Plants with school grounds available for play ground purposes.

Three Athletic fields.

Three Parks, Central, South and Woodland.

Four possible playgrounds, Cental, south and Woodland Parks, and The Stand Pipe grounds.

Two College Athletic fields--Haskell and K. U.

One Semi-public sport field--the Race Track.

One Y. M. C. A.

One Country Club.

Making a total of twenty-two available recreational centers.

One is immediately impressed with the fact that Lawrence has recreational facilities, that, if developed and functioned properly, would be of great service to the community. To take these centers and place them under some general recreational program would accomplish much more. We see again that the problem is not so much one of space, as it is the developing of what is already available, under wise leadership and supervision.

### Recreation Facilities that Lawrence Needs

1. Recreation centers open all the year.
2. Playground centers open all the year.
3. Recreation supervision and leadership.
4. School playgrounds.
5. Tennis courts.
6. Baseball fields.
7. Large evening recreation centers in downtown districts.
8. Water sport facilities.
9. Hand ball courts at school.

### Facilities in the Winter

School buildings, library, churches, Y. M. C. A., High School, could be well used as recreational centers. Schools grounds could be flooded for skating.

Thru a recreation system, the School and Park Boards and the City Council could get together, funds and interests could be pooled in a general scheme to provide for the free time of everybody, everywhere, and at all times. When Lawrence makes out her budget for next year it should contain something for recreation. A good recreational system is constructive and protective and as important as fire insurance or police protection. In other cities playgrounds and recreation centers have saved the community much expense in decreasing crime, truancy, vice and the need for fire and police protection. They

have prevented accidents in the streets and suits against the city. In other words they are money-savers for the city.

### Summary.

1. No municipal play leadership or organization in Lawrence.
2. No social and evening recreation centers.
3. Parks not developed along recreational lines.
4. School grounds unsupervised.
5. No provision for athletic life of girls and young women.
6. No playground supervised.
7. Few neighborhood play spaces for little children.

### Suggestions and Recommendations

1. Schools and playgrounds should be developed as neighborhood social and recreational centers.
2. South and Central Parks to be developed along recreational lines.
3. Development and use of race track grounds.
4. The establishment of tennis, baseball and sport fields.
5. Development of a summer system of playgrounds.
6. Swimming plunges and wading pools should be provided.
7. In neighborhoods without nearby parks or ample school grounds, vacant lots and fields being used for play should be organized under play leadership.
8. Active and definite cooperation between all semi-public agencies such as the Y. M. C. A. and the Municipality, should be established.



9. Lawrence should profit by the mistakes of other cities; they should look toward the future now while sites are cheap.

10. Extension of school properties.

11. To provide a Recreation Board with a Superintendent of Recreation.

12. To promote a scheme for paid and volunteer leadership on full and part time basis.

13. To conduct a Spring and Fall Play Institute.

14. To develop a Physical Education and Recreation Department in the Public Schools.

15. To give special care and attention to the athletics and recreational life of girls and of young women.

16. The Park Board to establish small neighborhood play grounds suitably equipped for little children. on vacant lots in different parts of the city.

17. To establish and extend the recreational social facilities of the Y. M. C. A. to every boy and girl in Lawrence.

18. To take care of the training of transient young women with no place to go--no recreation.

- 19. The utilization of University students as play leaders.

20. The development of story telling and community music.

## CHAPTER III

## DISCUSSION OF PRESENT RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

with

## SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Schools

The schools are a big factor in any municipal recreational system. They are usually well located and distributed, within easy walking distance of every child. They make excellent neighborhood playgrounds and social centers. School departments throughout the country are actively a part of Recreational Systems, either controlling or lending themselves to the recreational life of their community. In some cities, School grounds and buildings, after school hours, when they are not used for school purposes, are turned over to Recreational Boards as social and recreation centers.

Instead of recommending expensive alterations in the present school buildings to meet the vital needs of social recreational programs, the writer suggests for all new buildings especially the High School Gymnasium, these main points:

A large hall on the main floor, one or two gymnasiums on the ground floor, (auditorium and Gymnasium may be combined) a swimming pool, a number of showers, large room with movable seats and desks for play and library purposes etc., entrance and exits into the streets, proper light and ventilation, a stage and facilities for motion pictures.

## SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Cooperation of the Physical Education, Recreation and Athletic Departments of the Schools under the general advisory of the Superintendent of Recreation.

2. The organization thru part time paid and volunteer leaders in each school.

3. The development of public schools' athletic leagues, badge and other schemes for the encouragement of sports among all young people.

4. Tournaments, schedules, play programs should be daily and weekly staged at the large school grounds and athletic fields.

5. Development of the school as a social and recreation center.

6. The High School Physical Education instructor could be assigned to athletic fields for Saturday play.

7. Wherever possible shower-baths should be included in the public schools.

8. Play-rooms for indoor Winter Recreation have been provided in other cities, with splendid results.

9. Closer cooperation between the School Department and the Library.

10. As little apparatus as possible on the schoolgrounds. Schoolgrounds at the best are small, and without extensive apparatus would lend themselves better to games, sports, folk-dancing etc.

11. Schoolgrounds to be operated at recess periods, noon hours, afternoons and on Saturdays.

12. School vacation playgrounds to be maintained all day during the summer.

13. If possible, swimming, plunges, showers, and wading pools to be established in connection with the schools having ample land.

14. The organization of public school and high school athletics.

15. The carrying out of inter-class, intra-school, badge contests--in games, plays and sports of boys and girls, so that every boy and girl may enjoy the benefits.

16. The establishment of a Physical Educational and Recreational Institute every Spring and Fall, under the Physical Education and Recreation Department, in connection with the Recreation Board and Superintendent of Recreation.

17. The removal from all school property of all buildings, obstructions and obstacles. School property should be used for school purposes.

18. The development of sand boxes for the little children.

19. The doing away with cinders as a surface.

20. The development of story-telling in connection with the schools.

21. Cooperation with University.

22. Cooperation with business firms, in the establishment of playgrounds in adjacent fields for employees.

## P A R K S

Lawrence has four parks or squares:

1. South Park.
2. Central Park.
3. Woodland Park.
4. Stand Pipe Tract.

They could be developed for the play of smaller children with the erection of a few swings, sand-boxes, etc. A Swimming pool, for instance could be established in Central Park.

Woodland Park is one of Lawrence's greatest assets. The present effort of the City Council to make it accessible is commendable. This public park should go along toward filling the life of the people of Lawrence. The Recreation Board could in connection with the Park Committee, do much to place it in daily use, and make it a popular resort on Saturday and Sundays.

The Park Board could well spend a part of its annual income for recreational purposes because parks are recreational centers. The vital step in the development of parks is to promote and provide for trained play leadership to make these places more attractive and to place them in daily use. A young man, from the University, on Saturdays and Sundays, taking charge of the park recreational center, developing plays, sports and tournaments, would take the boys out of the bad places and keep them out of mischief. A young woman could do the same for girls.

The old notion of parks as horticulture spots is dead. Parks are for the use of the people. They are popular insofar as they provide recreational features, such as tennis, baseball,

golf, swings, water-sports, and amusements of all kinds. They serve their purpose insofar as they are health-giving, pleasure-affording and sport-promoting. The old signs, "Keep Off the Grass" have vanished. Parks are no longer places to stroll thru, but places of activity where people find relaxation, exercise, play and amusement. Parks are made for the people and not people for the parks. They are a means, not an end--an institution to foster life.

The old custodial notion of parks is going. Caretakers and gardeners are giving away to trained management and play leadership. The best beauty is being found in utility. Parks should be useful, not merely ornamental. The busiest sections of parks should be the play and sport fields. The management of these play places is just as important as employing a gardener or a caretaker. "Is the blush of the red rose more beautiful than the bloom of red on the child's cheek, from sun and play?" Why not cultivate pretty children as well as pretty flowers? We spend much time, effort and money on grass, flowers and trees and if the same time, effort and money were only spent on children, wonders would be accomplished in a short time.

Parks are in their essence, playgrounds. It is their recreational features that attract. Therefore an equal amount of effort should be expended in developing the recreational features of the park, as on the horticultural side. If "something was doing" at the parks, such as tournaments, concerts,

children's play, folk-dancing, carnivals under a popular teacher the young people would soon get accustomed to keeping off the streets and going to the parks. Create activities thru play thru play leaders and your children will not frequent alleys, backyards and worse places.



## RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. The development of South Park, as a recreational center, providing play apparatus and play leadership.

2. Provision for tennis.

3. Development of Woodland Park.

4. The development of swimming pools.

5. The development of the Stand Pipe Tract for park purposes.

6. The Park Committee should become an integral part of the recreational system of Lawrence, so that it can keep in close touch with all public and private facilities taking care of the recreation needs of the people.

By such steps greater efficiency and economy will be attained. It means the humanizing of the parks. The public parks should be well lighted at night. Complaints of rowdyism and a rendezvous of pernicious practice, is common in such places unless lighted and supervised. They are the people's park and should be used by them.

## THE LIBRARY

The library and its facilities is an integral part of a complete recreational system. It caters to the intellectual leisure time of the people. Librarians have forsaken the old custodial notion of stored books, to the vision of service, by making books easily accessible. Libraries should be advertised. Books should be brought to the people and not the people to the books.

Station and Circulating Libraries should be established in school buildings, on regular days and evenings. The school building should be used because it is public property--it is closest to the people and lends itself readily to the people. The schools and libraries should work in close cooperation. The writer suggests that Lawrence start a museum and that it be in connection with the library, thus the library should become a real intellectual center. This would avoid duplication in the building and maintenance.

## SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The establishment of Station and Circulating Libraries in connection with the schools, especially the social centers. These libraries should be open in the evening.
2. The encouragement of a community museum and art gallery in connection with the library.
3. The establishment of story-telling in connection with the library.

These steps do not entail much expense. They mean greater efficiency. They bring the library in touch with every citizen and home. It can be accomplished by cooperation and interest.

#### SEMI-PUBLIC RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The Lawrence Y. M. C. A. is an excellent plant but not nearly large enough to accomodate the young people of Lawrence. It has a splendid set of play leaders and is a credit to the community. The Y. M. C. A. should be of real service to the community in cooperation with the municipal Recreation Board.

The University has demonstrated its civic spirit by lending its campus and gymnasium for recreation. It must be counted in as part of any complete recreational scheme. Its young men and women can be developed as valuable play leaders, on a combined--volunteer and paid plan.

The race track site should be included in any complete recreational scheme. It could become a valuable athletic center for baseball and other athletic events.

#### CHURCHES

There are many churches in Lawrence, with good auditoriums, play rooms and play spaces that now lie idle. They represent an investment of many hundreds of thousands of dollars. The wider use of church property thruout the country is now being realized. Church plants ~~are~~ not always in use and can be used

for social and recreational centers. Gatherings, not religious, but social and recreational, lectures, entertainments and music could be had. The churches should be assisted thru the Recreation Board in this constructive piece of work.

#### V A C A N T L O T S

Many vacant places could become public utilities, simply thru utilization.

CHAPTER IV  
A RECREATION SYSTEM AND PROGRAM  
THAT WILL FUNCTION ALL THE PRESENT AND FUTURE FACILITIES  
with  
SYSTEM, BUDGET AND PROGRAM

It is my purpose here to summarize some suggestions and recommendations which will give some idea of the big recreational problem of Lawrence.

1. Creation of Public Recreation Board, five members, representatives from the school and Park Board and three persons to be appointed by the Mayor.
2. Development of physical education.
3. The creation of evening social centers in school buildings.
4. The development of temporary playgrounds, by the use of vacant lots and open fields, placing them under organized play leadership.
5. The development of Woodland Park and the Race Track site.
6. Development of the churches and semi-public institutions as apart of the municipal recreation plan.
7. Creation of A Play Institute every spring and autumn of the teaching of paid and volunteer leaders.
8. A Gymnasium in the new High School Building.
9. Promotion and regulation of evening recreation.
10. Summer playgrounds under supervision.
11. Development of community music.

12. The promotion of the play spirit thru picnics and public exhibitions.

13. Development of the recreation life of employees of industrial plants and business houses.

14. To capitalize public and private recreational facilities.

15. Promotion of inter-school and play ground leagues and the development of teams among the mills, factories and stores.

16. The need for intellectual, adequate and wise leadership and supervision.

## SOME DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF PUBLIC RECREATION

1. Supervision of public squares.
2. The promotion of recreation among working boys and girls, thru the organization of tournaments, leagues and play programs.
3. The development of recreation centers in connection with factories and mills, for the noon hour and after work recreation of the employees.
4. The use and development of open spaces for regulated play.
5. Taking care of summer playgrounds.
6. The supervision and development of water sports.
7. Development of community music.
8. The supervision of school grounds with sufficient play space and neighborhood social centers.
9. Supervision and leadership in the school social centers.
10. The establishment of a Physical Education and Recreation Institute in spring and autumn, for the teaching of paid and volunteer leaders.
11. The use of the University athletic grounds.
12. Supervision of the three city parks.

These distinct labors are sufficient to demand the creation of a Recreation Board--it means the intelligent organization of leisure time of Lawrence.

13. Organization and executive management of outdoor system; selection and training of play leaders; selection, purchase and installment of equipment; planning of buildings and alterations for recreation purposes.

14. Responsibility for evening recreation centers.

15. Responsibility for children's gardens.

16. Responsibility for conducting athletics and badge contests for both boys and girls.

17. Arrangements for celebrations of holidays.

18. Arrangements for pageants.

19. Cooperate with the Boy Scout activities and the Camp Fire Girls.

20. Arrangements for summer camp.

21. Provision for band concerts etc.

22. Responsibility for encouraging wholesome home recreation.

23. Studying recreations conditions of the city in an attempt to meet any special condition found.

24. Studying private recreation agencies to avoid duplication.

25. Supervision of commercial recreation.

26. Promotion of play away from playgrounds.

27. Arrangements for ice skating in winter.

28. Arranging coasting places.

29. Placing recreation workers in actual contact with homes of the neighborhood.



30. Arrangements for tramping trips.
31. Publicity as to what recreation work in the city.
32. Cooperation with other welfare agencies.

It is easily seen that Lawrence lends itself readily to a splendid municipal recreational system. One is impressed with the possibilities of the development of present facilities and opportunities. By getting together all the public and semi-public facilities enumerated, it is clearly seen that the immediate problem is not so much one of additional space, but rather a plan that will operate what is already available.

#### THE RECREATION SYSTEM

The system recommended includes the creation of (1) a Recreation Board, (2) a Superintendent of Recreation, (3) a woman assistant, (4) a fund providing for Play Leaders to work in co-operation with the school, park and other public departments and to furnish leadership for vacant places, industrial play fields and semi-public institutions, such as the Y. M. C. A.

Altho the Recreation Board should have its distinct field to operate, its most effective work will be in cooperating with the school and parks' boards towards the greater development of their common community plan.

## THE SUPERINTENDENT OF RECREATION

Just as Lawrence has a Superintendent of Schools, of Health, Of Public Works, so it should have a Superintendent of Recreation. The job is a big one and requires a highly trained man. To direct and supervise and develop the recreational features of Lawrence, and provide for the daily leisure of all people, demands a man of ability and zeal. He should be given an ample salary and sufficient help.

Some of this activities should be:

1. Cooperation with the Physical Education, Athletic and Recreation Departments of the School and Park Committees.
2. Promote games, sports, hikes, camps, dramatic leagues and tournaments.
3. Organize street and vacant play lot.
4. Help to utilize and vitalize public and semi-public recreational centers.
5. Advisory and supervisory powers over the parks.
6. Conduct training classes for teachers, parents, paid and volunteer play leaders.

### Woman Assistant

Something should be done for the girls and young women of Lawrence. On the whole the females outnumber the males. Much is being done to take care of the boys and young men but little to take care of the girls and young women. The superintendent

will be too busy to give any special attention to the girls. The handling of girls and young women must be done by a trained woman supervisor. She should organize the girls for the work for the whole of Lawrence.

### THE TASK of a MUNICIPAL RECREATION SYSTEM

1. It must be a clearing house for recreational activities, with the necessary intervening interests involved with all groups touching in any way the recreational interests of the community.
2. It is a real community work--it must have summer playgrounds, and establish evening recreation centers, and athletics. It must emphasize such activities as pageants, community singing, community drama, neighborhood parties and special celebrations of all kinds which draw the people of a community as member of the community.
3. Playground and neighborhood recreation center activities must be vitalized thru leadership and a program with a broad enough appeal to draw people to them in great numbers--thus making centers loom large in the life of all the people.
4. The Art interests of the people thru which the people find self-expression and mark the spiritual development of the people should be emphasized and encouraged.
5. The foreign born and negro population should be adequately provided for.

(Recreation centers must be vitally affecting the surrounding community.

7. Team play must be developed among the various organizations and agencies and a unified plan adopted. To get all the recreational agencies functioning for the entire community instead of for specialized groups.

8. Activities for bringing the people together.

1. Vacant lot play.
2. Winter sports (skating, coasting etc.)
3. Community picnics.
4. Holiday celebrations.
5. Pageants.
6. Community singing.
7. Band and Orchestra practice.
8. Choruses.
9. Community drama.
10. Community art.
11. Community forums.

9. Leadership.

The success of the system lies in proper leadership. The leaders should be "real folks" with a gift of friendliness, who will bring with them a vitality, a knowledge of people and sympathy with them which will vitalize the program. The centers should be attractive and well advertised. Features which draw the talent which is in themselves should be introduced.

10. Community music of all kinds.

11. The work of the Recreation Department must be made known to the city--by posters and newspapers and the pulpit; present work at meetings of all community groups. Most of the advertising should be done thru the people who attend the centers.

12. Solve the negro recreation problem.

## PLAYGROUNDS FOR LAWRENCE.

Lawrence has ample play space for the development of an excellent playground system. The playground problem in Lawrence is not one of space but one of leadership. Statistics in the Lawrence Survey show that the majority of the children play in the streets and alleys. The streets and alleys offer little opportunity and less attraction for play--first because of dangers and second because it is a poor place to play. The playground movement has spread rapidly in the past decade. Over 300 cities have supervised playgrounds. Actual statistics show where in Chicago, juvenile crime was decreased 50 % by introducing playgrounds into a territory. Judge Lindsey says, "The great majority of our so-called criminal class who are caught and confined are from the youth of the nation. I believe the police and courts are concerned with the lawlessness of more than 100,000 children in our cities annually, which means a million in a generation. The real reason for this is that the child has no place to play." He cites many pathetic incidents where children had no decent place to play and when attempting to play had gotten into a bad environment, and later convicted of crime simply because they had no place to play.

It is difficult to get adults interested in the play ground movement. Many of them feel that children will develop their play life naturally. It is true, play is instinctive in children, but children do not inherit the knowledge of organized games any more than they do the Lord's Prayer or the

Alphabet--hence the need for guidance and supervision in socialized play. Some one has said that playgrounds are expensive but are cheaper than burial grounds. Play is growth. Professor Lee says, "Play is the life of the race taking possession of the individual. Its function in the child is to make a man of him. In its effect on character play is first of all purposeful. From the first efforts to get his toe in his mouth to the highest achievements of the artistic impulse, its moral attitude is always devotion to an end. Play is never egotistic. The player's mind is not on himself, but on getting the ball over the line. Play is the school of the citizen. Its ruling passion is loyalty. From ring around the rosey to football the child is learning membership in the social whole." Someone has said, "A city without a playground system is a city without a conscience."

Lawrence needs a supervised playground system. It will cost something to establish a good system, but every dollar wisely on boys or girls in their development will return in dividends of manhood and womanhood. In considering the value of playgrounds many people are like the little boy who said that Sunday School was a place to go on Sunday for little boys, and where they gave their pennies and never got them back. Business men too often look at things from the narrow economic standpoint. The character of growing boys and girls is priceless and the most expensive playground system is cheap at any price. Lawrence owes it to her children and to herself to establish a supervised

playground system.

"A playground built to-day may save building a jail to-morrow."

## THE AUDITORIUM

The city of Lawrence needs an auditorium badly.

There is no place downtown for a big meeting. Because of this fact Lawrence loses many state meetings and conventions. Lawrence has the prestige of the University and could easily attract many conventions of this nature if there was an auditorium available.

Lawrence not only needs an auditorium for the accommodations of outside groups, but she needs it most urgently for her own civic life. As stated, earlier in this thesis, the writer feels that the community center will aid greatly in the solution of our Community ills. The writer feels as Miss Follett does, that democracy depends upon the creative power of every man. She says that we find the true man thru the group organization only. And adds that group organization will create the new world we are blindly feeling after; for creative power is evolved thru the activity of the group. She points out that group process is a single and identical process which integrated them into a whole. She clearly shows that the care of the social process is not likeness, but the harmonization of difference thru interpretation. Miss Follett says the big problem in American life is whether the people shall be a crowd under the laws of suggestion and imitation or follow the laws of the group. She closes the chapter with this striking statement, "It is not corruption, dishonesty we have to fight.; it is ignorance, lack of insight,



desires not transmitted. We want a state which will transmit the instincts of men into the energies of the nations. It all comes down to the fear of men. If we could believe in men if we could see that circle which unites human passion and divine achievement, we would live in a new world.."

The auditorium could be used for all kinds of gatherings for the enjoyment welfare and uplift of the people. Political meetings, men's and Women's clubs, of various sorts could meet here as well as organizations of the younger people of the community. Such a meeting place would draw various classes of people together and a spirit of friendliness would be fostered which is essential to a democracy. One might as well run a harrow over frozen ground as to try to promote a community without fostering the spirit of true friendliness. The writer feels that the community center is a social dynamo which which will gather invisible ~~and/or~~ wasting force, thus conserving social energy, by transmitting it into vital electrifying power, which shall reach the uttermost parts of the community.

The various school building should become neighborhood centers, for it is such groups that people bring to the surface their desires, needs and aspirations and really express their daily life. Some one has well said, "One does not learn his duty to his friends by reading essays on friendship but by living ones' with ones' friends and learning by experience the obligations which friendship demands." In other words the love of

our fellow men must be evolved from some actual group relationship. Many people talk abstractly of forming a league of nations but hesitate to put the same principle into practice in their own community. We certainly cannot know how to be one of a nation until we are one of a neighborhood. In the words of Col. Roosevelt, "This nation will not be <sup>(a)</sup> good <sup>(place)</sup> for any of us to live in until it is a good place for all of us to live in." These words could well be paraphrased to read, 'Unless this world is made <sup>(good)</sup> a place for all of us to live in, it will not be a good place for any of us to live in.'

Social problems are largely problems of contact. What men think of each other is largely a result of contact. It is easy to believe anything of a man whose life has never touched yours. Touch a life in a helpful way and you add to the world's stock of good will. The great social problems we confront today are national in extent, but all national problems have their local phases. People are so busy solving their "own" problems that they have no time to devote to community or national problems. The neighborhood center will give people a different attitude and outlook upon life by creating a social consciousness that will be vital and creative.

Lawrence does not have a vital community spirit. I am informed by parties close to the situation that a community program is extremely hard to put over in Lawrence. For instance, bonds were voted for a new high school building several

months ago but up to date nothing had been done towards constructing the building. The writer has interviewed many citizens of Lawrence of all classes on this proposition and without exception the people want the building under way. Now that which has to be done is to definitely formulate opinion in this regard--the neighborhood center will do this thing. At the center the forum will give the people an opportunity to express themselves in a natural and effective way, hence they may get the action they desire. So with any other problem the people can exchange ideas and think together on their vital problems. The writer feels that the auditorium and neighborhood centers would vitally affect the civic and social life in Lawrence and urges definite steps in this direction. He feels that thru these centers Lawrence will find itself and express itself in community terms thus breaking the individualism that holds the town back.

## COMMERCIALIZED RECREATION IN LAWRENCE

In the pool halls open to whites the average daily attendance is 700, of which only one-half are players. This means that an aggregate of 4,200 patrons a week in the winter and a grand total of 183,200 for the year allowing for a loss of 50 % for the summer months. These statistics show that the pool room provides recreation for a large number of men.

There seem to be at least three objections to pool halls (1) they provide a loafing place without uplifting surroundings. (2) the ordinance prohibiting boys under nineteen has not been enforced, (3) gambling with or without the knowledge of the proprietor has been carried on.

Perhaps the best solution of the pool hall habit and problem is municipal halls with the proper control and supervision. If municipal halls are not established the atmosphere of the present halls should be purified.

## THE HOME AND RECREATION

"The home should make ample provision for the outdoor as well as indoor play of the child. A study of Lawrence yards shows a lack of provision for outdoor recreation. Parents with Children in buying or renting a home, seldom take into consideration the outdoor needs for recreation of their children. A little tot who grows up without a sand pile has been deprived of one of the joys of childhood. Parents might cooperate in small groups in providing home apparatus. Tennis and croquet should be provided by the family wherever possible. We are passing from the point of view of looking at the front and back yard as a place of beautification and beginning to regard it from the standpoint of recreation. How much better it is to have a yard somewhat unkept in appearance, but a playground for children, than to have the yard all lawn and shrubbery and all the children excluded and sent out into the streets to play." Lawrence Sarvey.

Parents will find that children will be much more contented with their home environment if they will aid them in their amusements.

## COMMERCIALIZED RECREATION IN LAWRENCE

## PICTURE SHOWS

The writer has frequently visited the three picture shows in Lawrence. There are many pictures shown which would not be injurious to adults but which to have a demoralizing effect upon the impressionable child.

With few exception every show presents at least one objectionable film. While the majority of the films are unobjectionable a goodly share had objectionable incidents. In nearly every case the undesired scene could have been eliminated without injury to the plot. Shooting, drinking, gambling, the sex problem, suggestive incidents and the presenting of the evils of the city life ~~and~~ among the undesirable elements introduced. Cooperation <sup>with</sup> ~~of~~ picture show managers, to secure their assistance not only in removing undesirable features, but also in elevating the standard of pictures shown should be encouraged.

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